

African continent splitting into two parts

14th May 2026



There are signs that a huge part of East Africa is starting to break away from the African continent. Geologists (people who study the Earth and its land and rocks) studied a deep crack that runs along a large part of Zambia. The

crack is called a rift. It is a major fault in the rock that covers Earth's surface. Geologist Mike Daly of the University of Oxford is studying Zambia's Kafue Rift. He believes there is activity in the rift that suggests a giant piece of land is breaking away. He wrote: "There is evidence that the fault boundary of the Kafue Rift is active and therefore the Southwest African Rift Zone is too." He warned that this "may be an early indication of the break-up of sub-Saharan Africa".

The land on Earth is constantly moving. Three hundred million years ago, there was just one huge supercontinent. It was called Pangea. Over millions of years, Pangea broke up. Giant areas of land slowly moved across the oceans to form the continents we know today. This movement is called continental drift. Rifts are one reason why land masses split apart. The Kafue Rift in Zambia is part of a 2,500-kilometre-long rift zone stretching from Tanzania to Namibia. The rift is moving at a rate of about 4.7 mm per year. At this rate, it will take millions of years for Africa to split in two. Scientists believe that in 200 million years from now, there could be just one supercontinent again.

Sources:
newscientist.com / sciencealert.com / theweathernetwork.com

Writing

Africa is the greatest of the continents. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

signs / East Africa / continent / geologists / rift / Earth / fault / sub-Saharan Africa / land / three hundred million years ago / supercontinent / oceans / split / scientists

True / False

- 1) A huge part of Africa has broken off from the continent. T / F
- 2) There is a long, deep crack in the ground in Zambia. T / F
- 3) A rift is a crack that is a major fault in underground rock. T / F
- 4) A geologist said the rift in Zambia was inactive. T / F
- 5) The land on Earth stopped moving three hundred million years ago. T / F
- 6) There was once just one huge continent on Earth called Pangea. T / F
- 7) Rifts are one reason why continents move across oceans. T / F
- 8) All of the continents could join and become one in the future. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. huge | a. defect |
| 2. runs | b. break |
| 3. fault | c. sign |
| 4. boundary | d. shift |
| 5. indication | e. think |
| 6. constantly | f. very big |
| 7. movement | g. border |
| 8. rate | h. goes |
| 9. split | i. always |
| 10. believe | j. speed |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about Pangea?
- c) What do you think Earth was like hundreds of millions of years ago?
- d) Are you worried that our continents are constantly moving?
- e) How would Earth change if there was just one supercontinent?
- f) What are the most interesting things about Africa?
- g) What will Earth be like in 200 million years from now?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the geologists?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. a huge part of East Africa is starting | a. breaking away |
| 2. a deep crack that runs along | b. moving |
| 3. a major fault in the rock that | c. to break away |
| 4. a giant piece of land is | d. about 4.7 mm per year |
| 5. the break-up of sub- | e. from now |
| 6. The land on Earth is constantly | f. Saharan Africa |
| 7. form the continents we | g. a large part of Zambia |
| 8. This movement is called | h. know today |
| 9. The rift is moving at a rate of | i. covers Earth's surface |
| 10. in 200 million years | j. continental drift |

Discussion – Student B

- How great is Africa?
- What do you know about East Africa?
- What do you think a geologists' job is like?
- What is the best continent?
- How interested are you in geology?
- What do you know about the geology of your country?
- What would change if the African continent broke up?
- What is the best country in Africa?

Spelling

- It is a major lftau
- etooisglq Mike Daly
- suggests a gntai piece of land is breaking
- there is iedenvec
- bouadryn of the Kafue Rift
- this may be an early diicnoita
- The land on Earth is ntonstacyl moving
- Over omiisnll of years
- land slowly moved across the neosac
- This enemtmov is called continental drift
- why land masses tspil apart
- nrttegcish from Tanzania to Namibia

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. h	3. a	4. g	5. c
6. i	7. d	8. j	9. b	10. e

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions. (Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What are geologists?
2.	Where does Mike Daly work?
3.	What is a rift?
4.	What rift was mentioned besides the Kafue Rift?
5.	What part of Africa might break up?
6.	What does the article say is constantly moving?
7.	What was the supercontinent of 300 million years ago called?
8.	What is the movement of land masses called?
9.	At what speed is a part of Africa breaking away?
10.	What might there be in 200 million years from now?

Speaking – ~ists

Rank these with your partner. Put the best ~ists jobs at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| • Geologist | • Guitarist |
| • Artist | • Pharmacist |
| • Zoologist | • Psychologist |
| • Receptionist | • Dentist |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	T	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.